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Cubism and abstract art: Painting, sculpture, constructions, photography, architecture, industrial art, theatre, films, posters, typography

Alfred Hamilton Barr

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THE HISTORY OF THIS BOOK -- The 46th Exhibition of the Museum of Modern Art in the spring of 1936 was a landmark show which received nationwide press coverage. A massive retrospective of all things modern, it contained works from America, Europe, and even some African artifacts, featuring such artists as Arp, Braque, Cezanne, Calder, Giacometti, Le Corbusier, Mondrian, Picasso, Rodchenko, Moholy-Nagy, Mies, Man Ray, and on and on and on. Notoriously, US Customs denied 19 sculptures entry into America. The officials decided that the sculptures were not art! Specifically, they were not "imitations of natural objects, chiefly of the human form in their true proportion of length, breadth, and thickness." The pieces by Miro, Henry Moore, Hans Arp, and Giacometti and others were only released after the museum paid the expensive tariff for importing them as "building materials." ABOUT THIS BOOK -- Author Alfred Barr states in the introduction that the exhibition was "conceived in a retrospective -- not a controversial sprit." And in many respects, he was right. However one might define "modern" art, it had already been around for over 30 years. But for much of New York and much of America, this was brash, avant-garde stuff. Barr's book, therefore, is aimed at a general audience. It is an extraordinarily clear explication of the development of many art movements and adopts an educational tone which is never condescending. BOOK DETAILS -- 3,000 copies of this book were printed in April of 1936. After this, of course, the book lived on in many reprints. Cloth over hardback boards; 249 pp; released with a now seldom-seen dustjacket. B&w illustrations throughout. With a 30 p Catalog and a 16 p Bibliography.

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